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ADDRESS

OF THE

FILLMORE STATE CONVENTION

TO THE

PEOPLE OF INDIANA.

FELLOW CITIZENS: At a Convention recently held at Indianapolis by the friends of MILLARD FILLMORE for the Presidency and ANDREW J. DONELSON for the Vice Presidency of the United States, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to address you, on their behalf. This duty we now propose to perform with frankness and candor;—desiring to appeal to your *judgments* not your *passions*. And we shall endeavor to avoid all harshness of remark, that those who differ from us, may have no just cause of complaint.

Notwithstanding the scenes of tumult and excitement through which this country has passed, and the many stirring events that are crowded into its history, we have constantly found security in the fact that the people have energy enough for any crisis. To this energy we are indebted for the development of those characteristics that distinguish us as a nation, and place us second to no other people upon earth in all that constitutes greatness, intelligence, prosperity, and happiness.

It is but little more than half a century since our institutions were planted deep in American soil, and still deeper in the American heart. They have been steadily growing firmer and faster, with no cloud so dark as yet to dim their brightness, and no arm so strong as yet to shake a single pillar upon which they stand. The *past* of our history

which has secured us this elevation is, at least, safe;—safe beyond the reach of accident or of party. And while the *present* is now full before us;—while we are looking upon it every day—it is a duty imperatively enjoined upon us all, that we shall consider well and calmly what are to be its consequences upon the *future*.

This duty—at a time like the present—when a Presidential election is approaching, and when the passions of men are strangely excited by heated and acrimonious party discussion—is devolved upon every man, of whatever party, and involves a survey of the whole field of national politics;—not that kind of politics merely which is signified by the selfish intrigues of men who are only laboring for offices and power, but those great principles of government upon which our national prosperity must, so long as we shall enjoy it, be based. The skillful and experienced mariner, when the storm rages madly around him, never fails to watch every sign in the heavens, that his ship may be guided safely above the billows:—so the patriotic citizen, when the excited elements of political discord are distracting the country, will never fail to pause and consider how the tumult may be allayed, and how these angry elements may be hushed.

The existence of parties, in some form, is inseparable from the nature of our people and institutions. Even during the perfectly

pure and national administration of Washington, party hatreds and animosities were, to some extent, engendered by those differences of opinion which arose under the Confederation, and which were continued during all the early history of the Federal Union. They will always exist, varied by time and circumstances, so long as men are moved by the motives which have universally governed them, and so long as public opinion has to be appealed to as the great regulator of our affairs. And they will continue to produce organizations of men, associated together for purposes of common success, so long as public offices,—whether by their honors or emoluments—are more attractive than the ordinary pursuits of private life. But danger to our institutions does not necessarily spring from parties:—a moderate and well regulated party spirit will be more likely to render them solid and compact. It lies in those *excesses of party* into which we are now likely to be more deeply plunged than ever before, and which cause us to forget that our duty to the *Constitution as it is*, and as it came from the hands of our fathers, is paramount to all other political consideration*. And it is only to be avoided by an escape from these excesses, and by the perpetual employment of that *moderation and conservatism* out of which the Constitution sprang, and by which, alone, it can be preserved:—a *conservatism* which is as necessary to preserve our institutions as the absence of excess is necessary to our physical health. It is that sentiment which we shall address, with the hope that it may be yet sufficiently aroused to give quiet to the country,—that it may, like oil poured upon the troubled waters, once again smooth the surface of the National sea, so that the ship in which our destinies are freighted may ride safely onward in her course.

The length to which this address must necessarily be limited, precludes us from a detailed reference to those instances of party excess which have surrounded us with peril. One of the most dangerous of their consequences, however, is what is called the doctrine of a "*higher law*" in political affairs, which teaches, that the consciences of those who profess it, are too pure to be transmitted by legislative provision, and that the decisions of the Judiciary—both National and State—are no further binding than the mere voice of party or of individuals shall

require. This is the most dangerous of all the doctrines professed by any of the parties in this country, because there is no point beyond which it may not be carried, and it does violence to the "truth of history" to say that it grew out of the issues of the *present day*. It had its origin more than twenty years ago, and since then, whenever its advocates were in power, its influence has been felt in all the departments of government. It is of *Democratic* origin, and grew out of the discussion of the question of the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States. Upon that question the *Whig* and *Democratic* parties were divided, the former maintaining that the Charter of the Bank was, and the latter that it was not Constitutional. The Whigs insisted that the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States as to the law was binding upon the whole country, because the Constitution of the United States had made that tribunal the highest authority in the country upon all questions of law. The Democrats, upon the other hand, advocated a "*higher law*" than this—the *law of individual conscience*. Beginning with the President and ending with those who could neither read nor understand the Constitution, each individual member of this great party construed it as *he* understood it, and each one was drilled and disciplined to understand it *contrary to the decision of the Court*. In one of our great States, this excess of party was carried so far, that candidates for the highest court were interrogated by the party leaders, *before their election*, to know how they would decide this Constitutional question, if elected to the bench. The same course was pursued with the most delicate Constitutional questions, all tending to weaken confidence in and respect for the Judiciary, and politics became reduced to such a system, that the man who was the most skilled in the legerdemain and tricks of party, was the most successful in securing its favor and rewards. From time to time, by these means, the great measures of policy and the leading principles of government, which the founders of the Republic had established, were swept away, and those who desired to maintain them were said to be *behind the spirit of the age*. A new class of public men were brought upon the stage, and *conservatism* was lost sight of. These men were so different in all respects from those whom the country had been accustomed to find in

reverence, that they could see nothing either in the virtue or integrity of the past, sufficiently attractive to arrest the course of *progress* and of violence upon which they had entered. Commerce was crippled, trade was paralyzed, industry was unrewarded, bankruptcy stared the whole country in the face; but all this was not sufficient to stay the desolating march of party. It swept onward, like the blast of the simoon, withering and consuming whatever it touched. There was scarcely a point in our policy upon which it did not rest; and wherever it rested it left the impress of ruin. No spot was so sacred as to be secure from its influence, and no man of the past so cherished as to be freed from its violence.

We cannot look back upon the progress of this excess of party spirit and the doctrine of *irresponsibility to law* which it established, without seeing that the country is now surrounded by the very dangers which good and sagacious statesmen—the great leaders of the *Whig* party—then pointed out as the sure and inevitable consequence. They pointed out these dangers with a certainty which seems now to have been prophetic; but the voice of eloquent remonstrance and entreaty was drowned by the clamors of angry and excited partizans, who heeded no sentiment higher than that of success, and halted not at the means of its accomplishment. How forcibly does this brief retrospect admonish us to beware of similar excesses in the future!

The chief operators amongst the new class of politicians who were brought into power by the excesses to which we have referred, were Martin Van Buren and others of his particular school of politics. The avowed principle upon which these men had always acted, was that the public offices were mere "*spoils*" to be divided out amongst the "*victors*" of a party contest, in the same way as the booty of a battle field is shared by an army of unprincipled conquerors. Mr. Van Buren possessed no other qualification for the Presidency than talents of a high order. He had been a political intriguer all his life; and his only merit, even in the view of those who sustained him, was an obsequious and humiliating devotion to the political fortunes of Gen. Jackson. Without reference to principle or circumstances, or the condition of the country, he professed no higher ambition than to "follow in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor,"—without possess-

ing a single element of character for which that predecessor was distinguished. For the reason alone, that he made this profession of attachment, he became the candidate of his party for the Presidency and was elected. But the manner of his election, and the means and appliances which produced it, cannot have been forgotten by the thousands, yet living, who contributed to the result. They constitute one of the most important chapters in our recent political history—a chapter which may now be easily and truthfully written—and that, too, without offence, because his subsequent career has shown that, throughout his whole life, he has been indebted for success more to his cunning and intrigue, than to an elevated and statesman-like policy.

At the close of Gen. Jackson's administration all the political affairs of the country were left in confusion. The course of *domestic* policy which had prevailed from the beginning of the government, was destroyed. The principles of the dominant party were *negative* alone,—that is, they were *opposed* to the Bank, *opposed* to Internal Improvements, and *opposed* to protection to American Industry. They indicated no affirmative measures in the place of these.—They had but two articles of faith—first, *the support of Jackson*, and second *opposition to Clay and the Whigs!* When casting about, therefore, for a successor to Gen. Jackson, and finding everything at loose-ends, they were not a little perplexed as to the line of policy that would be most likely to secure success. They already had possession of the *offices*—the chief end of their laborious exertions—but it was evident that they must lose these without some expression of opinion in relation to the political measures of the future. The country was not in the condition—it was suffering too much in every part of it—to take another man wholly *upon trust*. Besides, Mr. Van Buren was not the kind of man to be trusted too far—and these cunning political schemers knew that such was the public estimate of his character. They were sagacious enough to see that the *negative* policy of Jackson only *pulled down the old order of things* which had been begun under the early Presidents, but that it substituted no *new* policy in the place of it. True, the *specie circular* of Gen. Jackson—issued only about four months before Van Buren's election—was designed as the basis of the sub-treasury scheme, upon

which he was to work his way into the Presidency, though his success might destroy the whole credit system and substitute a currency exclusively of gold and silver in its place. Therefore, he took a very early opportunity of declaring his "*uncompromising hostility to the United States Bank.*" But he and his sagacious supporters were well aware that they could not maintain themselves in the canvass upon the currency question alone—that if they could not invent some *other* and *new* mode of exciting the country and turning its attention from their political enormities, they would, inevitably, meet with defeat. This necessity for a *new hobby* as the means of retaining the "*spoils,*" puzzled and perplexed them not a little; but ever fruitful in resources and experienced in all the subterfuges and tricks of political parties, they, at last, found a method of escape. Knowing that their success depended altogether upon their being able to keep party spirit aroused to its highest possible point of excitement, they were not long in introducing, as their *new* element, a question which, more than all others combined, would arouse the passions and prejudices of men. This was the SLAVERY QUESTION, which then, for the *first time after the formation of the Constitution*, was made a test of party fealty, and introduced into the party contests of the country. No man, impartial and unimpassioned, who now looks back to this point of our history, can for an instant doubt that it is *just there* that all our *present* embarrassments had their beginning. The introduction, by the DEMOCRATIC party, of this new and exciting element of discord—the *Slavery question*—into our political controversies, was the foundation of that series of aggressions, both from the North and South, upon the integrity of the Constitution, which have shaken the Union from centre to circumference, and from the threatening dangers of which we are not yet saved. Had that single question been let alone—had it been permitted to remain upon the compromise ground where it was placed by the framers of the Constitution—we could have talked and wrangled and disputed until dooms-day about banks, tariffs, internal improvements, and all that sort of thing, without the slightest real danger to the Constitution and the Union. But the moment a Presidential candidate was required to make a pledge in relation to *Slavery*—the moment this delicate and dangerous question was

made one of the planks of a Presidential platform—that moment it was taken down from its high position of security in the Constitution, and made a mere foot-ball to be kicked about by unprincipled partisans and mad enthusiasts. There is no man of intelligence so blind, however unwilling he may be to acknowledge it, who does not *now* see that this is true.

At the time Van Buren became a candidate, there were no existing causes of complaint in the North against the South, or in the South against the North. Nobody then supposed that the *slavery* question, whatever other questions might do, could again assume an alarming attitude. There was no excitement, no agitation in reference to it. Here and there, perhaps, there may have been individual opinions expressed against the institution, as there have always been; and, perhaps, a few town meetings in the North may have adopted resolutions condemning it; but these were the murmurs of a *very few* only, who could not effect public sentiment anywhere or to any great extent. To require of Van Buren, to declare, as he did declare, that he "*must go into the presidential chair the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of every attempt on the part of Congress, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, against the wishes of the slaveholding States; and also with a determination equally decided to resist the slightest interference with it in the States where it exists,*" was not only unnecessary, but a most misguided step of policy, for the plain reason that there was no party in this country at that time (1836) proposing to do either the one or the other of these things. No man of character or reputation had ever seriously thought of such a thing; and it it was, therefore, not only bad policy, but dangerous, in every possible sense, to introduce such questions into a Presidential contest. But they were introduced, with an utter recklessness of the consequences to which they would lead. The *Democratic* party alone, therefore, are chargeable with their introduction. They began the agitation of this exciting element of discord, with the single purpose of securing a temporary *party* triumph; leaving *all the future* entirely uncared for. And in whatever aspect we view the present condition of things, *they* must stand chargeable, before the country and the world, with having precipitated us upon the dangers and difficulties

which are now, every day and every moment, thickening around us.

Gen. Harrison was the competitor of Van Buren in this first canvass after the slavery question had thus been made prominent in the *Democratic* faith. The views expressed by both of them were the same, in reference to the constitutionality and expediency of interfering with the institution, either in the States or the District of Columbia, but it is easy now to see, that the influences which produced those views were, in no respect, identical. Those of Van Buren were *put on*, like a loose robe that could be easily *taken off* again, to serve the immediate uses of his party; while those of Harrison were imbibed in his early education, and had become fixed and steadfast in his mature age. Party politicians prescribed Van Buren's for him, as the condition precedent to his nomination; while Harrison's were the unrestrained expression of his honest sentiments. Van Buren's were in opposition to every thing he had said and done before that time; while Harrison's were in consistence with his former political life. Van Buren had voted in the convention of New York, to extend the right of suffrage to *negroes*, placing even the *fugitive slave* upon a condition of equality with the white man; while Harrison, from the influence of his whole life, denied the equality of the negro with the white man, both politically and socially: he had, indeed, even gone so far as to participate, while Governor of Indiana Territory, in an effort to get the Ordinance of 1787 suspended for a limited time, that slaves might be held here. But notwithstanding all this; notwithstanding by the election of Harrison the *North* would have been *satisfied* and the *South* would have been *secure* in all her just and constitutional rights, yet Van Buren, with all his antecedents, received SIXTY-ONE SOUTHERN DEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL VOTES, and Harrison only TWENTY-FIVE SOUTHERN WHIG ELECTORAL VOTES! The *Democrats* of the *South*, then, contributed, by this vote, their approval of the policy of *agitating the slavery question*, while the *Whigs* of the *South* resisted the agitation by voting for a man who himself resisted it. How fatally did the *South* mistake its policy when it thus threw itself into the arms of Van Buren and his Northern allies!

At this day, as we look back upon this state of things and reflect upon the subsequent conduct of Van Buren and the sup-

porters of his "spoils" system both in the North and South, every honest and candid man is compelled to admit that if Harrison had been elected in 1836, the country would have been saved from those dangerous excitements that have since grown out of this slavery agitation. We do not presume to lecture either the North or the South, but standing midway between the two as Indiana always has done, the people of no other State have a higher claim to call upon them both, to consider *now* of these things, and to see how the Union itself has been shaken by the events we have related. We of Indiana, were the first to present Harrison as our candidate for the Presidency, because he was the representative of the principles of *conservatism* which we cherished, but *Southern Democrats* defeated him by electing a man whom they then knew to be insincere, and whom they now denounce with the deepest curses. And *Northern Democrats* exulted at the defeat, because by it they obtained temporary possession of the offices, caring, at the same time, no more about the *peculiar institution* of the South, than they did about the Chinese rebellion, except so far only as it contributed to their success. Now, after all this has passed it requires but little sagacity to see that the South was entrapped into the meshes of the net woven by the Northern Democracy, and that if it had, in the contest of 1836, stood by the conservative party which was led by Harrison, the guarantees of the Constitution would this day, have stood unshaken, and the country would not have been precipitated upon the dangers with which Van Buren and his Northern allies were then preparing to afflict it. The Southern Democracy, at that time, had the security of slavery in their own hands. The Whigs of both the North and South were united in their exertions to elect Gen. Harrison, who was pledged by his whole life and his personal inclination, to maintain slavery as it existed in the States, under the Constitution of the Union, who had opposed the Missouri restriction on the ground of its unconstitutionality and who had denied to the people of the Northern States even the constitutional right to discuss in their political meetings the question of the propriety or impropriety of slavery in the States of the South. The Whig party was, therefore, thus ready, at the very outset of the controversy, to meet the question fully, fairly, and at once;

and to decide, by the election of Harrison, that the peace and quiet of the country and good neighborhood between the States, was of more importance, both to the present and the future, than the triumph of any party. But the Democratic party of both the North and South, preferred not to meet the question in this aspect; and the Southern Democracy was especially furious in its denunciation of Harrison and his position. They—these Democrats—who *now* claim to be the only national party, preferred, in 1836, to vote for a man whose antecedents they *knew* to be all wrong, rather than yield their party claims to the possession of the offices!—The Northern Democrats pressed this man upon the country, reckless of the security both of the North and South for this reason alone. And Southern Democrats combined with them to elect him, after his vote for *negro suffrage*, rather than Harrison, who had made an effort to introduce slavery *here*, by a suspension of the ordinance of 1787, before this State was admitted into the Union. But while combined for this purpose, so as to secure the offices, they pursued very different modes of accomplishing it. In the South they charged that Harrison was an *abolitionist*! while in the North they charged that he was a *pro-slavery* man!! In an address to the people of this State, published by the Democratic State Convention in 1836, and written by the Hon. James Whitcomb, Gen. Harrison was accused of having approved bills, when Governor of the Territory, which authorized negroes to be brought here *as slaves*, and it was there said of him that he had sought to dim the “escutcheon” of the State, “with the foul blot of slavery.” And such were the opposite methods of success resorted to by these men who claimed to be the only guardians of the national welfare and honor, and who, under the mere name of *democracy* claimed to be the only *lovers of the people*! Anybody can now see the hollowness of these pretences. They were not worth the price of the bauble that amuses the school-boy. But they answered the purpose at the time, by deceiving two classes of people—the ignorant who knew no better, and those who look at all questions and all offices too, as the mere property of a political party, to be disposed of, as goods in market overt, with a single view to profit and speculation.

Let it be considered that if those who are now the loudest in their claim to conserva-

tive patriotism, had been, in 1836, content with the triumph of the *Whigs*, all controversy on the subject of slavery would have ended with the election of Gen. Harrison, without excitement or passion, and without danger either to the institution of slavery, or the quiet and peace of the Union. And let it be also remembered, that it was the *Southern Democrats* who first put the institution of slavery at hazard, by making it a mere foot-ball of party, to be kicked about as though it were a question of only to-day or to-morrow. These men, by the election of Mr. Van Buren, initiated that system of things that led to its agitation, and the excitement they produced by thrusting it into a political and Presidential contest, has been gradually growing greater and greater, until it has reached every nook and corner of the country. Let these historic truths be treasured up by all thinking men, as parts of what is past, that the future may be freed, if possible, from the some dangerous and threatening influences.

We cannot trace the history of Mr. Van Buren's administration; his attempt to convert the government into a mere machine for the support of the office-holders, by telling the people that they looked to it for too much; the adoption of the 21st rule in the House of Representatives, which denied the right of petition on the subject of slavery; the increased agitation which this rule produced; nor the causes which led the country to the conviction that he was utterly unfit for the Presidency. It is enough for our present purpose to say, that the popular indignation was aroused against him in 1840, and that the election of Gen. Harrison at that time, gave an immediate assurance that both quiet and confidence would be restored. And who can now doubt that it would have been, but for the unfortunate occurrence of his death in 1841! This event brought into the Presidency a man who had but little scruple about the means of securing a result, and who prevented the *Whigs* from accomplishing what, if Harrison had lived, they would have been sure to accomplish—the permanent peace and security of the country. So far as he had the means to prevent this, he did prevent it. But his power was not sufficient to arrest the course of a *Whig House of Representatives* in its effort to settle the *slavery* question as it then existed. This was done by a modification of the 21st rule, so as to recognize the right

of petition on the subject of slavery, but, at the same time, denying the right and power of Congress to legislate about it.

The treachery to the Whigs, of which Tyler was guilty, restored confidence to the Democratic party, and it again rallied for success in 1844. But it sought only for success by the same means it had employed in 1836, varied so as to avoid the causes of its defeat in 1840. This was another resort to the *slavery* question, in a new aspect; or, more properly speaking, to a question with which slavery was inseparably connected. It would be most instructive, if the occasion permitted it, to point out the steps taken at that time to bring about this new line of policy and to create a *new article of political faith*. Van Buren, with his *spoils* system had satisfied the *Northern Democracy*, but the *Southern Democrats* were becoming satisfied that he was ready to play them false upon the subject of slavery. Hence they secured, in the celebrated Baltimore Convention of 1844, the adoption of the rule which requires a concurrence of *two thirds* to produce a nomination, and thus placed it in their own hands. They desired the annexation of Texas, and were determined to defeat Van Buren, who, as well as Mr. Clay, had declared himself opposed to it. Everybody recollects the result. Van Buren received upon the first ballot a majority of sixteen votes over all the six others who were voted for—showing that the Convention, by that majority, was opposed to the annexation of Texas! But the combinations were strong enough to reduce his vote upon every successive ballot, and regularly to increase those of Gen. Cass, his strongest competitor, who had indicated a preference for the policy of annexation. After seven unsuccessful ballotings, an effort was made to return to the *majority* rule, but although, on the seventh ballot Gen. Cass had twenty-four votes more than Van Buren, yet the Southern Democrats were unwilling to the change, because they suspected that those who had left Van Buren would return to him and thus produce his nomination.

On the first ballot after this refusal to return to the majority rule, the vote of Van Buren was *increased*, which alarmed the annexation party, and immediately produced new and more formidable combinations, which, upon only two other ballotings, resulted in the nomination of Mr. Polk as the

annexation candidate. Very few events in the history of parties are more instructive than this. It is characterized by one leading feature—that although a *majority* of the convention were *opposed* to the annexation of Texas, yet the convention nominated a man *in favor of it*, and every single one of those who constituted this majority *voted for him!* It is an instructive commentary upon the practice of making party platforms and requiring the candidates of a party and all the members of a party, to surrender up their individual opinions and stand upon the platform, whether, in their hearts, they approve it or not. Every man of reflection must see that it leads, inevitably, to excess, by making the public welfare secondary to party success; that it brings a party into the condition of consulting the mere *expediency* of a nomination and the prospect of electing its candidates, rather than what is necessary to elevate the country and to develop its resources and its greatness. It is not easy to see that the most reckless and the most profligate readily acquire dexterity in this construction of platforms, and that to give such men power is neither more nor less than putting the peace and prosperity of the country at a most uncertain hazard? We have been accustomed to consider, and justly so, that our government possesses the power of self-preservation in a greater degree than any other upon earth. But we should reflect that as other republics, equally boastful of their security, have not been able to resist the combinations of bad men, so we, too, may not escape the consequences of placing our destinies in such hands. Heretofore, the stern virtue of the people has saved our institutions in spite of trading and trafficking politicians; their arms have been strong enough to pluck them from the flames kindled to consume them. Let us beware of the future. The chord that binds the Union together may be stretched so much, that a single blow may snap it. The bow of promise which has hitherto spanned our national sky, may be covered by a cloud, which may forever obscure its brightness. The man who will not employ every energy he possesses to avoid results so melancholy and disastrous, is not worthy to enjoy the protection of a Union such as ours is.

But the *Northern Democrats* required that some consideration should be given them for their consent to the annexation of Texas, and this was done by the promise that they

should have all of Oregon up to 54 deg. 40 min. of North latitude. And thus the Northern and Southern Democracy, with strong and mutual suspicions of the good faith of each other, came together upon the singular platform of 1844. What but the lash of party well laid on could have brought these men together upon such a platform? And even this would have been ineffectual, in the work of apparent reconciliation, but for the common thirst for office which pervaded this Convention. This was the sovereign panacea that healed over the wounds of the party, and cured up all its sores and bruises. Without it the Convention would have dissolved into its original elements of discord. And what a happy and fortunate event it would have been, if it had so dissolved; for then we might have escaped the present dangerous condition of our affairs, which its folly and party wickedness has brought upon us.

Mr. Clay was the competitor of Mr. Polk, and notwithstanding his immeasurable superiority failed of success. His acknowledged ability was not great enough to contend against the intrigues of corrupt men, and he was defeated by one of the most extraordinary combinations ever formed in this country. To say nothing of the falsehoods employed to hoodwink and deceive the voters of Pennsylvania and other tariff States, on the subject of protection, and those of the North-west on the subject of Internal Improvements—all of which are now acknowledged—this combination is, of itself, sufficient to admonish us of our present duty. The democratic banner contained at that time, a lone star, and "*Polk and Texas*" were the watch-words of the party, with now and then the faint cry of "*all of Oregon or none*"—"54° 40' or fight." Yet Mr. Polk received the *thirty-six* electoral votes of New York, which were sufficient to elect him, when it was well understood that the result would be the annexation of slave territory. And these thirty-six votes would have been given to Mr. Clay and thus have secured his election, but for the fact of the combination referred to. The democrats, by holding out false inducements to the large number of foreigners who were then emigrating to this country, had turned them so against Mr. Clay as to leave the balance of power in the State in the hands of the abolition party which had been brought into existence by the slavery agitation. This

party knew that the policy of Mr. Clay and the whigs, if it prevailed, would put an end to the agitation of slavery, which would terminate their occupation. And they knew also that the policy of Mr. Polk and the democrats, if it prevailed, would continue the agitation, as it had begun it, and that, therefore, they might possibly profit by contributing to its success. Hence the abolitionists voted for Mr. Polk in preference to Mr. Clay, and thereby defeated Mr. Clay, and secured the annexation of Texas; a result which has had the effect designed, that is to keep up slavery agitation for mere party purposes. The train of events have followed their courses in regular succession. The annexation of Texas led to war with Mexico. The war led to the acquisition of territory. The acquisition of territory led to increased agitation of slavery. The whigs foresaw all this and would have prevented it. The democrats may have foreseen it, but did not choose to prevent it. The abolitionists desired it and did all they could to bring it about, by defeating Mr. Clay, who alone of the candidates would have prevented it.

In consequence of the character of the measures that succeeded each other in rapid succession during Mr. Polk's administration, and their effect upon the country and the party, it became necessary, in order to make success more probable, to throw off Mr. Polk in 1848, and construct another platform, with new views upon the slavery question. Gen. Cass was nominated at the convention in 1848, and Gen. Taylor became his whig competitor. We desire to call attention, with some particularity, to the democratic platform of 1848, as we shall have occasion to refer to it when speaking of the opinions of Col. Fremont. It distinctly avowed the sentiments of the party and of Gen. Cass. It denounced the Whigs as maintaining the "creed and practice of Federalism." It denied the power of Congress to carry on a general system of Internal Improvements; to assume the debts of the States, to protect American industry, or to charter a national bank. It denied the power to Congress to interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, and, in reference to slavery agitation declared—"that all efforts of the Abolitionists or others made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, are calculated to

lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences; and that all such efforts have an inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people, and endanger the stability and permanency of the Union, and ought not to be countenanced by any friend of our political institutions." It declared that "every attempt to abridge the privilege" to foreigners, "of becoming citizens," of this country "ought to be resisted with the same spirit which swept the alien and sedition laws from our statute-books." It opposed the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands amongst the States. It denounced any attempt to curtail the veto power of the President. It justified the war with Mexico and charged the Mexicans with bringing it on. It complimented Mr. Polk for having defeated all the favorite measures of the Whig party; for the impulse he had given "to the cause of *free trade*, by the repeal of the tariff of 1842."

Upon this platform the Democratic party went into the canvass of 1848 and were beaten. Gen. Taylor was elected by the Whigs upon a conservative platform and, most emphatically, as the representative of conservative principles. The encouragement given four years before to the Abolitionists by the Democratic union with them in New York had made that party strong enough by this time to set up for itself, and they nominated Mr. Van Buren by a convention at Buffalo, upon a platform exclusively *sectional* so far as it related to the slavery question, as it was then understood by the whole country. We present three of the resolutions of this Buffalo platform, that their precise resemblance to those lately adopted at Philadelphia by those who call themselves Republicans may be pointed out hereafter. They are as follows:

Resolved, That it is the duty of the Federal Government to relieve itself from all responsibility for the existence or continuance of slavery, wherever the Government possesses constitutional authority to legislate on that subject, and is thus responsible for its existence.

Resolved, That the true, and in the judgment of this Convention, the only safe means of preventing the extension of slavery into Territory now free, is to prohibit its existence in all such Territory by an act of Congress.

Resolved, That we accept the issue which the slave power has forced upon us, and to their demand for more slave States and slave Territories, our calm but final answer is, no more slave States, and no more slave Territory.

We repeat that this platform was under-

stood at the time by the entire Whig and Democratic parties as an *abolition* platform and was opposed and denounced as such.— In this State there were few men so bold as openly to advocate it, and these were considered as fanatics and dangerous men. To charge either a Whig or Democrat with maintaining these sentiments, would have been considered as personally offensive.— But they were maintained by the supporters of Mr. Van Buren, who acted under the lead of Hon. Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, the Hon. John P. Hale of New Hampshire, the Hon. Benjamin F. Butler of New York, and others less distinguished; and so maintained that Van Buren received, exclusively in the Northern States, 291,569 votes out of the 2,898,043 that were cast. Of these 120,519 were obtained in New York alone—nearly half of what he received—showing that they were taken from the Democratic vote there, by Van Buren, himself a Democrat, which, having been cast against Mr. Clay, caused his defeat four years before.— He received in Illinois, 15,804; in Maine, 12,124; in Massachusetts, 38,263; in Michigan, 10,389; in Ohio, 35,456; in Pennsylvania, 11,200; in Vermont, 13,837; in Wisconsin, 10,418; while in Indiana he received only 3,643; showing that Indiana, of all these Northern States was the most national and conservative. Shall these 8,643 voters, then treated by all parties as *abolitionists*, by pertinaciously adhering to this Buffalo platform, draw now a majority of the voters of Indiana to a platform mainly prepared by the same men who prepared the one at Buffalo? We submit this question to the calm judgment of the people of the State.

The rapid strides towards success made by the barn-burning abolitionists from 1844 to 1848, made them bolder than ever before, in pressing their doctrines up on the country in every possible form, both in Congress and the State Legislatures. The acquisition of Territory from Mexico, and the condition of the people of California and New Mexico, demanding the immediate establishment of governments amongst them, presented a large field for their operations and opened widely the door for agitation. Hence the great contest of 1850, which shook the Union to its base and alarmed the most sagacious Statesmen of both the great parties such as Clay, Webster, Fillmore, and Cass. But that contest was most happily settled

without a disruption of the Union, because the leading spirits of that day thought more of their country than of themselves. And it was settled in a mode that was considered as a *finality*, by simply letting the question of slavery alone. As such a settlement was inconsistent with the ulterior purposes of the abolitionists in the North and those who were called fire-eaters in the South, these united in their opposition to it. But the country approved it and the public verdict was rendered in its favor; so much so that in the canvass of 1852, the great question between the Whigs and Democrats was, which of the two parties was most in favor of it.

Gen. Taylor's administration, sustained in the Senate by Clay and Webster, did as much as any administration could have done to bring about this settlement. But Mr. Fillmore's did more; because the death of Gen. Taylor threw upon him the responsibility of meeting the difficulty directly, at a time when the storm of excitement was at its height. All parties except the Northern Abolitionists and Southern fire-eaters were satisfied with the compromise of 1850. As extremes often meet, these two parties met in opposition to it, just as they would have met in opposition to any measure of peace. The reason was well understood at the time, and must be better understood now. It was this, that neither of them *desired* to see the country in a state of quiet, such as by the ascendancy of Whig policy under a Whig administration, everybody knew would be produced. Each of them desired *agitation*, the Abolitionists at the North and the Fire-Eaters at the South, hoping that, by that means, each section of the Union would become consolidated. The Abolitionists regarded the consolidation of the North as necessary to their success, and the Fire-Eaters regarded the consolidation of the South as necessary to their success; neither party caring the weight of a straw what would be the effect upon the Union. And hence these parties both exerted themselves to the utmost to defeat the Compromise of 1850, and both were equally hostile to Mr. Fillmore's administration, under which it was passed. But the great body of the Whigs and Democrats united in its support, which made it the greater triumph over faction, and took from it its party character.

But notwithstanding Mr. Clay, the great leader of the Whigs, was the master-spirit

who directed each step of the adjustment and Mr. Fillmore was President at the time and gave them all his countenance and approval, yet the compromise was scarcely made before the Democrats sought to turn it to the profit of *their* party. Therefore, at the nomination of Gen. Pierce in 1852, he was placed upon a platform which declared it to be a "*finality*," and which pledged him to maintain it inviolate. The Whigs made an equivalent pledge for their candidate—Gen. Scott—but the Democrats insisted that this pledge was not sincere, and kept up the *agitation* by denouncing Gen. Scott and his supporters as favoring the cause of the Abolitionists. This was especially the case in the South, where the Fire-eaters, who had opposed the compromise, were then united with the Democrats. They formed this union, for the purpose they had always cherished, of *keeping up agitation*, hoping to unite the Southern States together in favor of *secession from the Union*, by persuading them that the great body of the Northern people were their enemies. As they were generally bold, daring and desperate men they found little difficulty in moulding the whole Democratic party to their will, and this false accusation, made both in the North and South, became their chief element of success. By bringing the South more compactly together than ever before, it secured the election of Gen. Pierce, and placed him in a condition in which he became bound to lend all the power of his administration to keep this idea prominently and constantly before the country. How he has done it everybody knows. With how little of success he has managed affairs, is in the mouth of everybody. He came into the Presidency with a strong party; he will go out of it with none. He is property of the Democratic party, and "let the dead bury their dead."

After the defeat of such a man as Gen. Scott by such a man as Gen. Pierce, the Whigs felt themselves no longer under obligation to keep up their party organization, and the Democrats immediately commenced a new game of consolidation. This was to absorb in the same party with the Fire-eaters of the South, that portion of the Northern Democracy that had exhibited what were called Free-soil proclivities. The administration of Gen. Pierce was used for this purpose, but every effort to accomplish it was without avail. Yet these efforts had

this quality about them, that they proceeded upon the spoils system of Van Buren, by attempts to buy up the disaffected with offices. Those who took the offices were willing enough to sell themselves, but then the misfortune to the party was that, as these went into the party, others went out of it. Hence, instead of consolidating the Democrats, it broke up their union, and Gen. Pierce who had been used for the purpose, was made the victim of the failure. He had to go through his four years as the nominal head of the administration, but as the strongest element he had mixed with his administration was obtained from the Southern Fire-eaters, he was obliged to fall back into the arms of that party, and rely chiefly upon its support. Thus he lost all power for good, and was finally thrown aside by those whom he had served.

The efforts to divide the patronage of the administration of Gen. Pierce between the men who had supported him in the South, and those whose Free-soil attachments had led them to oppose him in the North, had the effect of exciting a large portion of the Southern Democrats against the administration. It soon became apparent that these would be lost and that the Democratic party would go to pieces at once, if some counter-acting policy were not adopted. The expedient resorted to was the *repeal of the Missouri Compromise*, and the re-agitation of the slavery question. As the introduction of of this agitation in 1836, had elected Mr. Van Buren, by giving him more Southern Democratic votes than he could have got in any other way, so it was readily concluded that the quiet in which Mr. Fillmore, at the close of his administration had left the country, was, by no means, favorable to the success of the Democratic party. Those who directed the policy of that party knew perfectly well that, as it had had its origin in a storm of excitement, it must come to its dissolution in times of quiet. Therefore, this opening again of the slavery discussion, after the whole country, except the Fire-eaters and Abolitionists, had approved the settlement of it.

A more unfortunate and ill-timed, and unnecessary movement was never made. The whole country was quiet, and nobody, either North or South, asked its repeal. Having been originally adopted, at a time of high excitement, and by men of enlarged and patriotic views, it had acquired a sort of

sanctity in the public mind. The two factious parties we have already named—the Fire-eaters and the Abolitionists—were opposed to it: the former, because it prevented the formation of slave States north of the parallel of 36 deg. 30 min., and the latter because it permitted their formation South of it. But neither of these had power to repeal it. The Fire-eaters had the greater power, for they controlled the administration, and by that means the whole Democratic vote, and, therefore, they pressed and secured the repeal; as the means of consolidating the South. The Abolitionists rejoiced at the repeal more than if they had procured it themselves, for it secured them *agitation* without being chargeable with having begun it. So that, these two extreme parties were both satisfied, while the great body of the people deplored and condemned the act.

As a counteracting policy to the consolidation of the South in favor of the Democracy, the abolitionists immediately seized upon this unfortunate and unnecessary repeal, as the means of consolidating the North against the South, and of bringing the two sections of the Union in direct antagonism to each other. And they were sagacious enough to see that the condition of parties furnished them plausible hopes of success. The Democratic party had, for years, so conducted itself towards foreigners who came here, by continually courting them and by extending to them in several of the Northern States, as well as in the Territories, the right of suffrage before they were citizens of the United States and had taken the oath to support the Constitution, that large numbers of them were in the habit of assembling, as foreigners, and pledging themselves to maintain their distinct foreign peculiarities, in casting their votes, so as, ultimately, to engraft their political ideas upon our institutions. This led to the formation of an American party, distinct from all the other parties in the fact that its proceedings were conducted in secret. It was composed of both Whigs and Democrats, who had united for a common national object—that of preserving the country from foreign influence and from the control of foreign opinions. The men who formed this party and who first went into it were not politicians. It was, emphatically, a movement of the people against the politicians. Its doctrines, however, partook of

the character of those maintained by the Whigs in one important particular, that they ignored the slavery question entirely and were based upon national ideas alone, so that both Northern and Southern men could equally maintain them. Its organization soon became so formidable, that it arrested the attention of the only two other parties then in existence—the Democratic and the Abolitionist. As it was, from the nature of its principles opposed to Democracy, the Abolitionists at once began to court it, with the hope that it could be used, in the end, so as to subserve their purposes. Numbers of them, in all the Northern States, therefore, became members of the American party and generally aspired when they did so, to be its leaders, that they might, the more easily, use it. They omitted no opportunity of endeavoring to mix up their peculiar anti-slavery opinions with its proceedings, so as to prepare it for being finally transferred entirely to their party. And in some of the Northern States they have partially and, we fear, too fatally succeeded; while elsewhere in the North, they have been less successful. When they have not succeeded they have broken up the organization in all cases where they had the power, as their acknowledged motto is—"Rule or ruin."

At the National Convention of this party, Mr. Fillmore of New York and Mr. Donelson of Tennessee were nominated for the Presidency and Vice Presidency, before any candidates were nominated by the other parties. They are both national and conservative men, and represent, most emphatically, the national and conservative doctrines of this party. Mr. Fillmore was always a Whig, but when that party gave up its distinctive organization, in as much as he could not become a Democrat, he adopted the views of the American party as the most successful mode of advancing the public welfare. Mr. Donelson was always a Democrat, but abandoned that party in consequence of its having surrendered itself into the arms of the fire-eaters of the South, and there was no other course left him than to adopt also the opinions of this party. And thus these two distinguished men met together upon common ground where thousands of others met both North and South, and where they would have remained but for evil counsels. Being conservatives themselves they could, of course, stand upon no other political platform than one that would

avoid extremes, and as this was the basis of the foundation of the American party, such a platform alone would truly represent its opinion. Hence the national and conservative platform of the American party—a platform which enables those who stand upon it, without surrendering their individuality and making themselves mere machines, to express the fullest devotion to the American Union, without giving preference to either North, South, East or West.

But besides the regularly acknowledged Abolitionists, there were others in the north who had not belonged to that party, but who were willing to *unite with it*, and had become members of the American party for the purpose, mainly, of consummating such a union. As it was supposed that it would be more available to act in the party chiefly through the instrumentality of this latter class, they were generally prominent whenever anything had to be done in reference to candidates. They furnished a sort of battery from behind which the real Abolitionists fired at the very heart of the party, and at the National Convention openly avowed, for the first time, their hostility to its *national and conservative* organization.—Upon the nomination of Messrs. Fillmore and Donelson, they withdrew from the convention and the party, and entered into an organization in opposition to it and its candidates. This organization was based upon the idea that it was desirable to *unite with the Abolitionists*, it was necessary to make some concessions to them, as it was very well known that they never made concessions to anybody. Therefore, the members of it adopted, in the main, the peculiar notions of the Abolitionists, except, perhaps, upon the question of directly interfering with slavery in the States; either as a bid for the votes of that party or as a tender of their services to it. At all events, they abandoned the *national* organization of the American party and formed a sectional organization of their own, avowedly for the purpose of joining their votes with those of the Abolitionists in order to elect a President and Vice President.

The main ground of opposition to Mr. Fillmore by these disaffected and seceding Americans was his support of the Compromise of 1850, and especially, his approval, while President, of the Fugitive Slave Law. There may have been, and doubtless were,

those amongst them who, individually were not opposed to the execution of this law so long as it remained unrepealed, but even these were aware that in order to secure the Abolition vote it was necessary to throw aside Mr. Fillmore because of his agency in its passage, and hence they acted with the seceders.

This rupture in the American national organization produced, as might have been expected, the most extraordinary combinations, until almost every northern State had its own distinct local organization. And in this condition the Democrats found the country at the assembling of their nominating convention. The contemplation of such a prospect greatly excited their hopes of success, and they brought forward Mr. Buchanan for the Presidency and Mr. Breckinridge for the Vice Presidency, under what they considered the most favorable auspices. They made their organization conform at once to the condition of things around them, by so shaping it as to secure as large a vote as possible in the south, as the most successful method of counteracting any movement that might be made by those who should shape their course so as to produce a union of all the parties in the north with the Abolitionists. They do not assert the most ultra southern doctrines on the subject of slavery, but announce those of such equivocal meaning that the members of their party in the north and the fire-eaters of the south, can all unite in their support, and each claim that their own peculiar views are contained within them. They justify the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the re-agitation of the slavery discussion, and assert the doctrine of squatter sovereignty in the Territories over slavery—a doctrine so utterly at war with the constitution and so completely a party humbug that its recognition by this convention must have surprised, most of all, some of its own friends. Taking this convention, however, and its platform and, more especially the Democratic manner of conducting the canvass, all together it is apparent that the democrats only hope to succeed in the election of Mr. Buchanan by producing the object for which they have so long labored—the consolidation of the south in his favor.

In the meantime, while these proceedings were going on, those in the North who were dissatisfied with Mr. Fillmore, were endeavoring to unite all the opponents of the Dem-

ocratic party in the North, so as to consolidate the North in their favor and in opposition to the South. They avowed the purpose of not looking to the South at all. The first practical step towards an amalgamation such as they sought, was the assembling of a Convention at Pittsburg, on the 22d of February last. This Convention was called by those who professed to represent their party in only *five Northern States*, and was composed chiefly of those to whom we have already referred, who are opposed to the national organization of the American Party, but Abolitionists were also united with it. It was mainly controlled by the latter, and resulted in the postponement of a Presidential nomination, and the recommendation of a Convention at Philadelphia, that the union between those who composed it might be made more complete. This latter Convention met, composed as the one at Pittsburg had been, of opponents of the National American party, *including Abolitionists*, and nominated Col. Fremont, of California, for President, and Mr. Dayton, of New Jersey, for Vice President. It had no delegates, except one or two self-constituted, from the South, and was, therefore, an exclusively Northern and Sectional Convention. It has nominated citizens of Northern States as its candidates, and their supporters expect to secure their election exclusively by Northern votes, not expecting to get a single Southern vote. Hence their exertions to consolidate the North in antagonism to the South.

Col. Fremont has always been a *Democrat*, and we are not aware that he has ever renounced the faith of this party. His nomination did not require him to do it, as it permitted him to retain all his former opinions, provided he concurred with those who nominated him upon the single question of slavery. We learn from Bigelow's life of him, (page 390,) that when a candidate for the United States Senate in California, in 1849, he answered the question, whether he was "a believer in the distinctive tenets of the Democratic party?" in these words: "I presume that it will be a sufficient answer to your first question, simply to state, that by association, feeling, principle, and education, *I am thoroughly a Democrat*; and without entering into any discussion of the question at issue between the two great parties, I have only further to say, that I *ADHERE* to the GREAT PRINCIPLES OF THE DEMOCRATIC PAR-

TY AS THEY ARE UNDERSTOOD ON THIS AND THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CONTINENT." He stood, therefore, upon the Democratic platform of 1848, with Gen. Cass and his supporters at that time. He concurred with that platform in denouncing Whigs as Federalists. He opposed a system of Internal Improvements. He opposed protection to American industry. He was in favor of Free Trade. He denied the constitutionality of a Bank of the United States. He was in favor of the Sub-Treasury. He was opposed to distributing the proceeds of the public lands amongst the States. He was opposed to taking away the veto power from the President. He justified the war with Mexico, and maintained that it was brought on by that country. He justified our demand of indemnity from Mexico in the shape of territory. He approved of all the measures of Mr. Polk's administration—the annexation of Texas and all. He recognized the doctrine that "every attempt to abridge the privilege" of foreigners in this country, "ought to be resisted with the same spirit which swept the Alien and Sedition laws from our Statute books." And on the subject of slavery, while he maintained that Congress could not interfere with it in the States, yet "that all efforts of the abolitionists and others made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, ARE CALCULATED TO LEAD TO THE MOST ALARMING AND DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES; and that all such efforts have an INEVITABLE TENDENCY TO DIMINISH THE HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE, and ENDANGER THE STABILITY AND PERMANENCY OF THE UNION, and ought not to be countenanced by any friend of our political institutions." These were the opinions of Col. Fremont in 1849, as announced in the Democratic platform, and expressed by himself in his direct endorsement of them. Except upon the question of slavery, they are not such as commend him to any who have heretofore been Whigs. Upon that question, his present attitude is such, that it receives the severest condemnation in what he then professed.

Mr. Dayton has heretofore been a Whig, but opposed Mr. Clay and the Compromise of 1850, and for that lost his seat in the Senate.

Considering, therefore, the former opinions of the nominees of this Convention, and also the strange and heretofore incen-

gruous materials of which it was composed, it was altogether impossible to place them upon any other than a sectional platform.— And in doing this more concessions had to be made to the Abolitionists than to any others who were members, for it is perfectly well understood that they always *take* but never *give*. Hence we find that the leading practical idea contained in the Barnburner's platform in 1848 and in that of the Abolitionists in 1852, is embodied in this Philadelphia platform—that is, that it is the duty of Congress to secure liberty (which can only be done by *abolishing* slavery) wherever Congress has exclusive legislative jurisdiction. This exclusive jurisdiction of Congress is fixed by the Constitution, over the *District of Columbia*, and all the lands owned by the United States, within the States, for the purposes of navy yards, dock-yards, arsenals, forts, &c. Consequently, this platform proposes to abolish slavery at all these places; notwithstanding Col. Fremont by subscribing to the Democratic platform of 1848, considered these things as threatening the peace of the country and endangering the Union. That there were some in the Convention that nominated him who desired both of these consequences, we have little doubt.

As was expected, a nomination made under these circumstances, is only to be maintained by *sectional* appeals. Hence we hear of nothing but slavery and of appeals to the passions. Everything, however trivial, is seized upon to add to the excitement. We are constantly reminded that the North is superior to the South—that slavery is a curse, a sin against God, a violation of the national law, and that it is a blot upon our national escutcheon. All these things and many more are constantly before us, that the public reason may not be appealed to and that the voice of conservatism may not be heard.

This party considers it most fortunate that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise came to its assistance. It has seized upon the acknowledged wrongs inflicted by Missourians and others from the South, upon the people of Kansas as the chief means of advancing its cause, but these have been aggravated at every repetition. The imbecility of the Administration having become so manifest to all parties in Kansas, as that things have gone on without restraint until civil war has begun, they are seeking

to impress the North with the conviction that peace alone can be restored and freedom secured to Kansas by the election of Col. Fremont. In our opinion, peace cannot be restored by the election of either him or Mr. Buchanan. And the reason is plain—each is the representative of an extreme party. Mr. Buchanan, relying upon the South for support, will justify the pro-slavery party. — Col. Fremont, relying upon the North, will justify the free State party. In neither of these events will there be peace. The true ground is between these two parties—the conservative ground. As *both* these parties in Kansas are clearly wrong, and both have been guilty of excesses, the success of conservative principles is necessary for the safety and security of the country, if not the existence of the Union. With the restoration of the Missouri Compromise or some equivalent measure in reference to Kansas or with the conservative influences that Millard Fillmore would exercise as President, the angry contests of party would, at once, be quieted and the country restored to its wonted peace and prosperity.

And there are thousands in the country who, heretofore, seemed not to be apprehensive that the danger was approaching so closely, but who are now becoming aroused to the importance of this truth. The Convention of Whigs recently assembled at Baltimore, represented this class. As Whigs who met without any distinctive party organization, they have considered the nature of the present crisis, and deemed it their duty to again buckle on their armor for the fight, and to do battle in behalf of the Constitution and the Union. They have seen the dangerous excesses of party to which we have referred and this has alarmed them.— Upon all the old issues of parties, they could vote for neither Buchanan nor Fremont, because both are Democrats of the most obnoxious sort—those of 1843. Upon the slavery question they can vote for neither of them, because Mr. Buchanan and his friends are appealing to the South, while Col. Fremont and his friends are appealing to the North. But one course, therefore, was left for them and that was to take a conservative position, which was always the position of the Whig party—a position looking to neither North nor South alone, but to both, or the whole Union. And as Mr. Fillmore was the only candidate who occupied this position, they have endorsed him as their

candidate and recommend him to all the Whigs throughout the Union. He is consequently not only the American but the Whig candidate also.

How can a Whig vote for Col. Fremont? Upon all the cardinal doctrines of the old Whig party, he is diametrically opposed to what the Whigs have supposed necessary to promote the public happiness, and the single question of slavery out of the way, would conduct the government in opposition to their frequently declared opinions, and those of their great leaders—Clay, Webster, Harrison, Taylor, and others. He would so shape the domestic and foreign policy of the government as to make it essentially Democratic, according to the obnoxious tenets proclaimed by that in 1843—which he professed to cherish and revere from “association, feeling, principle and education.”

How can an American vote for him?— That party sprang into existence in consequence of the fact that foreign influence was so much felt in our elections as to endanger the stability of our institutions. It has declared, in a thousand forms, that, while it did not desire to interfere with the religious opinions of Roman Catholics or their spiritual dependence upon the Pope of Rome, yet that exercise of any temporal authority by the Pope, in this country, in the control of our elections, would be attended with the most alarming consequences. And we now see that the leading supporters of Col. Fremont have directly appealed to this temporal power of the Pope. They have published the Bull of Pope Gregory, XVI, on the subject of slavery and have addressed it to the “Catholic Citizens” of the United States, with the declaration that it is a “command” to them, and that they are “bound” to obey it, by voting for Col. Fremont as the opponent and enemy of slavery. Must not every man who has *American* blood in his veins, feel called upon to express his indignation at such an open violation of every cherished principle of his heart!

The Abolitionists may easily enough vote for him—for although all who support him are not Abolitionists, yet that party would gain more by his election than any other.

As the American candidate, Mr. Fillmore could easily have beaten Mr. Buchanan.— But the extreme and ultra men of the North were determined that he should not do that. Their hatred of him on account of his conservative administration was so great, that

they preferred to run the hazard of Mr. Buchanan's election rather than see him succeed. Hence they brought out Col. Fremont and diminishing the chances of Mr. Fillmore's success, by persuading those of his *professed* friends, who were willing to unite with the Abolitionists, that such a union would be more likely to secure them the victory. Thus they have drawn away from Mr. Fillmore, in several of the Northern States, those of this class who look to success by *these means* as preferable to success by a conservative support of him, and all these combined are now endeavoring to blind the country to the dangerous consequences of a sectional contest. In doing this, they constitute one extreme of party, while the supporters of Mr. Buchanan constitute the other; one looking to the North and the other to the South. And it is wonderful how precisely alike are their modes of appeal to the two sections. In the North the supporters of Col. Fremont say that Mr. Fillmore has no strength in the South, and that therefore all the North should vote for their candidate. In the South the supporters of Mr. Buchanan say that Mr. Fillmore has no strength in the North, and that therefore all the South should vote for their candidate. And between the two they are constantly employing the most successful means of making the contest exclusively a sectional one—such an one as must, inevitably, endanger the Union.

We do not say that the election of either Mr. Buchanan or Col. Fremont *will* dissolve the Union; we mean to say that it *may* do it. The danger lies in this—that either would, necessarily, be a sectional President, and conduct a sectional administration.—This would still farther than at present alienate one section of the Union from the other; and the breach gradually becoming wider and wider, would soon become so great that no

human power could heal it. Our Union is too sacred a thing to be put at such a hazard as this.

What then, in this condition of affairs, is the duty of the citizens of Indiana—of those who have always been Whigs and of those who are Americans? Is it not to support Mr. Fillmore, who is the only conservative candidate, and who alone represents the only sentiments heretofore cherished by our people? He has distinctly declared that he, if elected, will not be the President of any section, and his conduct when President before is an ample guarantee that he will live up to this promise. Let us support him, then, without reference to mere expediency, and because it is right to do so. Why should we war upon our Southern brethren; or why should they war upon us? We all belong to a common country. A common flag floats over all of us. A common Constitution protects us. We derived our institutions from a common ancestry, whose blood was mingled upon the battle fields of both North and South. Let us then inculcate between the citizens of all parts of our Union a brotherly affection, and cherish it as the only means of preserving our institutions for our children. This can only be done, in the present posture of affairs, by giving an earnest support to Mr. Fillmore, who does not desire to see the South consolidated against the North, or the North against the South, but the whole Union so cemented together, in all its parts, that no power shall be strong enough to dim the lustre of a single star upon our common flag or to strike it from the national galaxy.

R. W. THOMPSON,
MILTON GREGG.
WM. H. GREGORY,
WM. G. ARMSTRONG,
A. H. DAVIDSON,
JONATHAN PAYNE.